

business in this Senate if our colleagues mislead us?

The current Presiding Officer, who happened to be the Chair at the time, was surprised, as were the rest of us.

Fortunately, we keep a transcript of our remarks, and I went back and I quoted from it again. I do not in any way criticize the right of any Senator to propose an amendment at any time that is under the parliamentary rules. But to stand up on the floor of this Senate and say you are going to do one thing and then you do another is not only inappropriate, but it risks—it risks—a breakdown of the kind of courtesy we have to extend to each other if we are going to function as a body.

So now the larger issue. The Senator from Nevada and the Senator from New York are dead set on an amendment to negate the agreement concerning the leasing of terminals in the United States by the United Arab Emirates. I understand the passion they feel on that issue. I respect their views on that. But do we have to—knowing full well it would tie up the Senate—the Senator from Nevada has been around here as long as I have. Knowing full well it would tie up the Senate, bring to a halt any action we might take on ethics and lobbying reform, still we are insistent upon that.

Now, the Senator from Connecticut and the Senator from Nevada will stand up: It is our right, it is our right to propose any amendment that is in a parliamentary fashion acceptable. I agree with that. I do not dispute their right. I do dispute stopping—which it has; now we are not going to move forward until after the cloture vote—stopping our progress on the issue which is more important to the American people or as important in an orderly fashion.

The Senator from Nevada knows full well if we are going to act legislatively in this body he is going to have an opportunity to propose this amendment. If we are going to act legislatively, we could stop, we could not do anything in the Senate for 45 days or a month or until the upcoming elections.

But my point is—and I want to, in fairness, say I see a lot of the same thing on this side of the aisle quite occasionally, quite frequently, that we will propose amendments to gain some kind of political advantage. That has always been part of the way we have done business. But hasn't it gotten out of proportion to our first obligation, and that is to do the people's business? Isn't that the reason why only 25 percent of the American people approve of what we do and how we do it? Aren't we concerned? Aren't we concerned about how the American people feel about us, the people we purport to represent?

What we need to do here is for the leaders on both sides, with others, to sit down and map out an agenda we can all agree to. But to bring this process of ethics and lobbying reform and earmark reform to a halt for the sake of

an amendment that has nothing whatsoever to do with the businesses at hand, which is highly contentious, I think is not doing the people's business.

I want to emphasize again, I do not dispute the right of the other side of the aisle to act in a parliamentary fashion. There is nothing illegal they are doing. But I would hope that perhaps the greater good would prevail here, and we could sit down and work these things out, which would require concessions made on both sides, which has been the case of the way the Senate functions.

So I must say, I have only been here since 1987, but I have never seen anything like I saw yesterday in the years I have been here. But it is also symptomatic of the bitter partisanship that prevails here, which prevents us from doing anything meaningful or doing very much meaningful for the American people.

If my friends on the other side of the aisle want to give this side of the aisle some of the blame for this partisanship we experience here, I accept it. I accept it. I do not debate it. My point is, it is time we sat down and mapped out an agenda we can all agree to, and start doing the business of the people of this country first and our parties' business and political advantage second.

I do not mean to be contentious in these remarks. I do not mean to be too critical. But I did happen to be on the floor yesterday and see something, as I said, I have never seen before. We have to stop, take a deep breath, sit down together, and start working together. That sounds a bit utopian or Pollyannaish, but it is not. And in the many years I have been here, I saw people able to sit down—even if they had strongly held feelings—together and work things out. We are not able to do that today. It is time we changed course.

I thank my colleagues for their patience. I hope I was not in any way condescending in my remarks concerning my concern about this body.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MURKOWSKI). The minority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Schumer amendment be withdrawn and that it be immediately considered as a free-standing bill, with a time limitation of 2 hours equally divided; no amendments or motions in order; and that upon the use or yielding back of time, the Senate then vote on passage of the bill.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Maine.

Ms. COLLINS. Madam President, I object.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Who yields time?

The Senator from Connecticut.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Mr. DODD. Madam President, let me, if I may, respond to some of the things that have been said. I see my good friend from New York is here as well. I expect he may want to share some thoughts. I will not be long. First, let me say to my good friends from Maine and Arizona, they are truly wonderful friends, and I have worked on countless occasions with both of them. I regret we are in this situation as well. I say to my friends, this is a matter that is extremely important. We have all worked very hard in a bipartisan fashion to bring up both this lobbying reform and ethics reform package. So I am still confident, despite the differences that occurred yesterday, that we are going to achieve that goal.

I had hoped we would be able to finish it by this week so we would not end up having an elongated debate about the subject matter. I do not think it needs that much time. I am sorry that is not going to occur.

Let me also quickly say to my friend from Arizona, much of what he has said I agree with. I am a product of this place in many ways. I have been here a long time. I sat here on the floor as a page back—I think Jefferson was President when I sat on the floor here, that is how long ago it was—watching Lyndon Johnson sitting as Vice President of the United States, and with the all-night civil rights debates, and so forth. So I am very much a product of this institution. My father served here, and so I have great reverence for the Senate.

I too regret what has happened in many ways, that we do not spend the time to work out matters, as we have done on this bill. I think this bill has been a good example of how the Senate ought to function in many ways. That is not to say we are all going to agree on every amendment offered, but we created a process by which this can be done. I am disappointed we come here on Tuesdays and leave on Thursdays. There was a time when we used to come on Monday and stay until Friday, and there was ample time during the week for consideration of matters.

Part of the difficulty is, today, when you know you have to come in on a Tuesday at about 5 and leave on Thursday at about 5, then in order to deal with all the matters in front of you, you start doing things or offering things in a fashion you might not otherwise were there more of an opportunity to deal with it.

I counted up last night. I suspect, if I am correct, that there are about 60 legislative days left in this session. Assuming we will probably adjourn sometime in September for the fall elections, we have 60 days left to deal with a variety of issues.

My colleague from Arizona is right. Look, the numbers are there. The American public is not happy with how they see their national legislative body